



# Montgomery County Council

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**For Immediate Release**

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***Another piece of Council's balanced program of road, transit improvements...***

## **COUNCIL APPROVES MONTROSE PARKWAY**

***New road will address traffic congestion between I-270 & Rockville Pike***

The Montgomery County Council today voted overwhelmingly to give the green light to building the Montrose Parkway, a 1.8 mile road project in North Bethesda designed to alleviate traffic congestion between I-270 and Rockville Pike.

Montrose Road would be widened from the current four lanes to six lanes between I-270/Towers Oaks Boulevard and Tildenwood Drive, where a four-lane Montrose Parkway would be constructed, dipping south and east and running parallel to the continuation of Montrose Road toward Rockville Pike.

The project will cost \$62.8 million and would be completed in two stages to coordinate with a new interchange to be constructed by the state of Maryland at Rockville Pike and Montrose Road. The first section, from I-270/Towers Oaks Boulevard to East Jefferson Street would be completed by spring of 2008. The second section, from East Jefferson to Rockville Pike could also be completed by then if the state moves to program the intersection project. The Council approved funds to move ahead with design on both sections.

"Montgomery County motorists need this new road so they can spend less time in traffic and more time at home with their families," said Council President Steve Silverman. "Now, thanks to the Council, they'll have what they need."

"We are putting County dollars on the table to make sure this important project happens," said Silverman. "We are doing it in a common-sense way to coordinate with a state-funded interchange at Rockville Pike and Montrose."

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“And we have made sure the communities along the way have the protections and the amenities called for in the Master Plan – noise walls bought and paid for entirely by the County and a hiker-biker trail.”

“The Montrose Parkway is clearly needed to help resolve our difficult transportation challenges,” said Councilmember Isiah Leggett, chair of the Council’s Transportation and Environment Committee. “The revised staging and timing of the construction of this project – plus the amenities for the community – can be accommodated in our six-year capital program without seriously impacting other important projects.”

Much of the funding for the project will come from the county-wide development impact tax approved by the County Council on March 12. The impact tax requires developers to pay more toward the costs of transportation projects.

Approval of the Montrose Parkway is only the latest piece of the County Council’s balanced program of road and transit improvements.

The Norbeck Road Extended project, which will ultimately consist of four lanes extending from Rockville to I-95, will open later this year.

The Council has also cut Ride-On bus fares by 44 percent, boosting ridership, and also added buses to the fleet.

And the Council has urged the state to move forward on construction of the Inner Purple Line metro and the Corridor Cities Transitway, which would run along the I-270 corridor.

Under the plan approved today, the project would also include:

- \$1.8 million to construct noise walls to protect the North Farm and Old Farm neighborhoods straddling the project, with costs borne entirely by the County;
- A sidewalk on the south side of Montrose Road between I-270/Tower Oaks Boulevard and Tildenwood Drive;
- Programmed construction funds for a hiker-biker trail that would eventually run from I-270/Tower Oaks Boulevard to Old Farm Creek near Rockville Pike;
- Minimizing impact to Old Farm Pool and the Faith United Methodist Church by providing a sidewalk rather than a bike path in their segment, replacing lost parking, and considering adjustment of the width of the median and the road alignment in front of the facilities; and
- Construction of parkway with lane widths of 11 feet rather than 12 feet, with a ban on heavy trucks.

Due to the staging of the project, the Council's plan will be \$4 million less than the original proposal over the next six years and those funds can be directed to other priorities.

Voting to approve the Montrose Parkway were Councilmembers Silverman, Leggett, Nancy Dacek, Howard Denis, Derick Berlage, Michael Subin, and Marilyn Praisner. Opposed were Councilmembers Phil Andrews and Blair Ewing.

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